PEACE CORPS
volunteer
JANUARY 1968

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A long-time staff member suggests ways to maintain:

An 'oasis in the wasteland'

I speak from just about the most repugnant position a staff member ever can take—that of the old salt, the person who has been around for so long he knows it all, the veteran who waxes ecstatically about the good old days when all the Peace Corps Volunteers in the world would have fit into one small auditorium.

I take this stance for a purpose—the Peace Corps, as an organization, has gained much in six years: we're more professional, better organized; training and programming have improved. But it has lost something too, something vital in the gradual erosion of the individual experience. The new establishment is the in-country Peace Corps staff. More and more, we make decisions affecting your experience that you should make for yourself. And the fault is as much yours as mine, and that's why I want to go back over the record to see how an organization that's only six years old can have hardening of the arteries.

First, for the new Turkey Volunteers, I'll establish my credentials as a bona fide historian. I'm the oldest man in the Peace Corps. Jack Vaughn didn't interview me—I interviewed Jack Vaughn. I've been with the Peace Corps since 1961. Congress has passed special legislation to see this doesn't happen again. Five years is now maximum, by law. I've been around so long that Volunteers sometimes ask me, "What did you do in real life?" And I tell them it has been so long I don't remember. I think I was governor of California.

A maverick agency

In my time, I've given advice to Sargent Shriver, and I've given advice to Jack Vaughn. When I gave advice to Shriver, he sent me to Sierra Leone. You see what happened when I gave advice to Jack Vaughn. He sent me here—he had just read in the newspapers that the Turks were phasing us out, and felt they could do what Congress could not—phase me out of the Peace Corps. I see the ears of the CD

The first Volunteers (Ghana I) embark in 1961. Today, says the author, "disenchantment sets in early for too many Volunteers, and much of this stems from a concern that the Peace Corps really isn't that different, that it intrudes too much."

By DONOVAN McCLURE
Ankara, Turkey

Photo by John Buzenberg

The overseas staff is the "new establishment" of the Peace Corps, thanks in part to the failure of Volunteers to take the responsibility to make the experience what it should be. "I see no need for anyone to throw in the towel and say this isn't the Peace Corps he thought it would be, that it is hamstrung and regimented, that it isn't really the maverick it promised to be. Help change it." Above: Volunteer Reuben Aaronson and Ecuador staff member Mark McGrath at a recent completion of service conference in Chile.

Volunteers perk up as I mention "phase out." This is one of the Peace Corps' better euphemisms. In *theory*, phase out is the perfect Peace Corps departure—Volunteers work themselves out of jobs by training host country nationals to replace them. In *practice*, it is like leaving the scene of an accident.

But to get back to my stance as Peace Corps historian, and where I think we've gone wrong. For most of the men present there were three choices open to you when you got that A.B. degree: graduate school, the military, or the Peace Corps. And I think a great many of you chose the Peace Corps because you honestly felt it offered the possibility, at least, of a challenge to you as an individual. The Peace Corps enjoys the reputation of being the maverick of the Establishment, an oasis in the bureaucratic wasteland. It is a reputation to be proud of, but one that is being tarnished. It is my fear that few of you find the Peace Corps as attractive today as Volunteers did a year ago, and those a year ago got something less out of it than the group preceeding them. In 1961, for example, the first group of Volunteers to Pakistan went overseas. Two years later, all of them completed two-year tours. That was par for the course in the early years. Now, disenchantment sets in early for too many Volunteers, and much of this stems from a concern that the Peace Corps really isn't that different; that the Peace Corps, as an organization, intrudes too much; that your course here is planned and plotted by others, who, in effect, dictate your Peace Corps experience.

Origins of staff

I was trying to figure out how all this happened, and that's what got me into this historical analysis. I feel it went something like this:

In the beginning, there wasn't going to be a staff. Just Volunteers, assigned to the various ministries in the many countries where they were requested to serve. But it occurred to quite a few of our ambassadors that these Volunteers were going to require in-country logistical support that the embassies simply weren't equipped to handle. So the Peace Corps decided a couple of staff people might be necessary in each country to see that the Volunteers got their mail, living allowances and adequate medical care.

Next it was discovered that assignments weren't that simple either. A major problem for a developing country is to properly utilize what trained manpower it does have. Too often, the only six math teachers in a country will wind up at the same *orta* (junior high school) site. Or all of its doctors will be in one province. So it was decided that staff was necessary to work as a liaison between the Volunteers and the ministries, to insure that each Volunteer had a job where he could be effective, and if he didn't have a job, to move him where he did have one.

As Peace Corps Volunteers began working overseas, it also was discovered that enthusiasm and a three-month training program weren't always enough—that it simply wasn't logical to drop people into jobs without follow-up technical help, and expect them to do well. So professional support became a key area for staff.

Logistics, liaison with the ministries, and professional support on the job. That's staff's function.

Now somewhere along the way, staff also became Amy Vanderbilt, drawing up rules and regulations of deportment and behavior, and J. Edgar Hoover, to enforce Amy Vanderbilt's rules and regulations.

And we've also created a welfare state that it takes a strong Volunteer to stay out of the clutches of. If you want to rent an apartment in Ankara, you go see the Ankara Field Representative—he's got the whole list of apartments. He'll also explain what dolmus you catch to get to the section of town he marks off for you on the map. There was a time you probably would have found that apartment for yourself. And incidentally, he'll also tell you we have a policy that you can't live in certain areas of Ankara, because in the past Volunteers made a Peace Corps ghetto of one neighborhood.

Origins of policy

A Volunteer loses his wallet in a local disko and the next morning comes in to ask the Peace Corps to make up half his loss. You have problems with your roommate? Take it up with your Field Officer. He'll handle it. I cite these examples only to give you an idea how we became Amy Vanderbilt, and why you find Peace Corps butting into so many of what should be private and personal affairs. Also, why your individual experience is becoming a corporate one.

For staff, the hand-holding and spoon-feeding isn't as objectionable as playing cop. For a time, the Peace Corps did very well in this country with no rules and regulations, other than those from Peace Corps Washington and the ministries you work for.

Today we have got a book of them that gets fatter every year. And we have them because along the way too many Volunteers abdicated their individual responsibilities and rules became necessary. Take our vacation policy, for instance. Peace Corps Washington says you can't go to Europe, but Peace Corps Turkey restricts you further with our own geographical boundaries. And, we feel, for good reason. In the past, Volunteers have run out of both time and money on trips to Thailand or India, and cabled us for cash to get back, and left us with the messy job of soothing an angry *mudur* (school director).

So the Peace Corps has changed. You find the Peace Corps staff intruding in your lives in a great many ways that you never anticipated when you joined the Peace Corps. As a result, Peace Corps staff is something to be dealt with, rather than worked with, as an Iran Volunteer newsletter put it recently.

You don't like us setting policy in areas where you feel you should use your own judgment and discretion. And we don't like it either.

As staff, perhaps we've over-reacted to incidents and problems. Maybe we should endure occasional shock waves; it might be preferable to rules and policies that stifle the individual experience. Suppose we abandoned all Peace Corps Turkey regulations. Suppose you go to Nepal on your vacation and you run out of cash and time. Maybe that should be your problem—and when you finally get back to your site, you explain to your *mudur* what happened. If he wants to take you back, fine. If not, again, that's your problem. And about housing in Ankara and staff fears about a Peace Corps ghetto: if everyone wants to live in the same apartment building and change its name to the Jack Vaughn Towers, might that not be preferable to rules and policies telling you that you can't?

'Help change it'

Who is responsible for how we deport ourselves in this country? Is that staff's job? I don't think so. Each of us is responsible to the Peace Corps as an organization. I don't expect you to write sonnets to the Peace Corps, extolling your devotion, nor to wear Peace Corps T-shirts in your towns. But we owe responsibility to the taxpayers who foot the bill, who make it possible for all of us to be here. And to the ministries of the Turkish government that invite us.

What I'm asking is that you take the responsibility for making the Peace Corps experience what it should be. I think the latest Volunteer conference was a step in the right direction. It was your conference, not ours, and you examined what you thought was important, and ignored what wasn't.

Rather than be alienated or disenchanted by the shortcomings you see in the Peace Corps, work to change it. Peace Corps Washington is staffed largely by returned Volunteers, and overseas staff is made up mostly of former Peace Corps Volunteers, including many of the top spots. Two Volunteers in the Sierra Leone program, when I was there, are now country directors. So, I see no need for anyone to throw in the towel and say this isn't the Peace Corps he thought it would be, that it is hamstrung and regimented, that it isn't really the free-wheeling maverick it promised to be. Help change it. I think the point we must realize is that for all its shortcomings, this Peace Corps is the only one we've got, and it remains the best idea, the best hope, the best potential that I see nourished by our government or any other government in the world today. Ernest Hemingway wrote that the only way to know a country is to earn your living in it, and that is what the Peace Corps makes possible for so many of us to do. We're not tourists on the periphery; we're involved, and that entitles us to the headaches and frustrations and the tedium that the involved encounter everywhere, where they're part of the action.

What I'm saying is: if you want to make the Peace Corps what it should be, I'm on your side. Let's work together. We, as staff, don't like to be considered as something to be dealt with. We'd like to be worked with. The Peace Corps is a movement to be enjoyed. So let's enjoy. Good luck, and have a good year.

Donovan McClure has been the Peace Corps director in Turkey for a year and a half. Since joining the agency in 1961, he has also been an information officer, deputy director of the Office of Public Information, Peace Corps director in Sierra Leone, and associate director for Public Affairs. A journalist, he came to the Peace Corps from The San Francisco Chronicle, *where he was assistant city editor.*

The remarks presented here were adapted from an address he made last fall to all Volunteers in Turkey.

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ON THE COVER: At top, Volunteer Tom Braden protects his head from a dirty bird (for further explanation, see page 17). Center, a scene in rural Africa; Frederic C. Thomas writes on "rural transformation" beginning on page 8. Below, a city contrast: Brasilia, and *favela* dwellers in Rio de Janeiro; a new job for city Volunteers is proposed on page 5. And Donovan McClure counts to seven (the Peace Corps year about to begin), looking back, on page 2.

Tom Grill

Paul Conklin

A proposal for Volunteer researchers

Toward urban methodology

By PATRICK HARE

Urban community development, unlike rural community development, has no well defined methodology. It is ineffective and to make it work its methodology must be developed. Until this is done "the city" will be an embarrassment to the Peace Corps.

The scant information available on urban CD seems to indicate that it is generally little more than the application of rural CD techniques to the city, and that whatever its roots, the methodology of urban CD could use some development. This view is supported by the lack of any known, successful, large-scale urban CD programs, and by the fact that the Peace Corps has, for the most part, been ineffective in urban CD. For example, in Honduras, out of a total of about 25 Volunteers who have worked in urban CD, none has been able to develop a site to the point where it was felt worthwhile to replace him. Unless effective techniques are developed the Peace Corps will either be in the position of continuing to assign Volunteers to two years of, in most cases, unproductive frustration, or else of being honest enough to withdraw from urban barrios. The latter has increasingly been the case in Honduras, except for a few placements such as the wives of Volunteers working in technical positions in the city. To write off cities in this way would be to write off a part of the work of the Peace Corps.

Volunteers should not be assigned to develop urban communities, but to develop urban CD, as "Volunteer researchers."

Instead of assigning Volunteers to develop urban communities, the Peace Corps should assign Volunteers

to develop the methodology of urban CD. More precisely, Volunteers should not be sent overseas to attempt to do in the city what is being done in the *campo*, but to attempt to define techniques of urban social development. An example of the kind of work that would be done by "Volunteer researchers" is the definition of the communication systems of an urban barrio. As a result of such work, it would, for example, be possible to determine by referring to a bibliography that an effective way to communicate something to an urban barrio is to put signs in the buses serving it. Similarly, Volunteer researchers might be able to define ways of preventing the leaders in a barrio from being drained off by the other outlets for leadership that a city offers.

They could try to determine how to start changes in reward systems so that nationals begin to receive the respect they deserve and require in order to keep working. They could develop definitions of the physical characteristics needed to define barrios, and make people identify with them, and ways to create those characteristics where they don't naturally exist.

Volunteer researchers would divide their time between CD, and analyzing and communicating what they had done in CD.

Urban CD site placements would not change. But what Volunteer researchers did in urban CD would not be as important as the way they analyzed what they had done and communicated that analysis to others so that their successes could be repeated and their failures avoided. Roughly 50 per cent of a Volunteer researcher's time would go toward making sure that his experience was not lost. This time would be spent in activities such as reading in areas related to his work and research, participating in frequent conferences with other Volunteers and interested host country nationals, and writing articles for a Peace Corps-sponsored journal on urban social development.

Volunteer researchers will require field support from a staff member with background in social research, an urban community development bibliography and a journal.

A Peace Corps-sponsored journal to let Volunteer researchers know what is currently being done in urban social development is one example of the field support Voluntee. researchers would require. They should also have a staff member or Contractor's Overseas Representative with a professional background in social research capable of helping them in the same way regular staff members and Contractor's Overseas Representatives help Volunteers. Finally, a bibliography on urban CD should be developed. It should be updated at fixed intervals to include new materials produced by Volunteer researchers and others, and provided, along with materials requested from it, to Volunteer researchers in the field. These types of field support are important not only because they will help the Volunteer researcher to build on the work of others, but also because they will assure him that the work he is doing will be used by others.

Since the existence of a "community" in the city is a debated question, the research area would be better defined as "urban social development."

Training programs will have to be developed to train Volunteer researchers to work as participants in a discipline.

It should be possible to recruit for projects in "Urban Community Development Research" (UCDR) a relatively large number of people with degrees in such areas as sociology and anthropology. It will still be necessary to develop a training program for UCDR projects that will make the trainees feel the value of building on each others' work, and of documenting their own work so that it can be built on as well. In other words, a training program will have to be developed in which the trainees are made to feel both the productivity of the process known as a discipline, and the effect their participation in that process will have on cities.

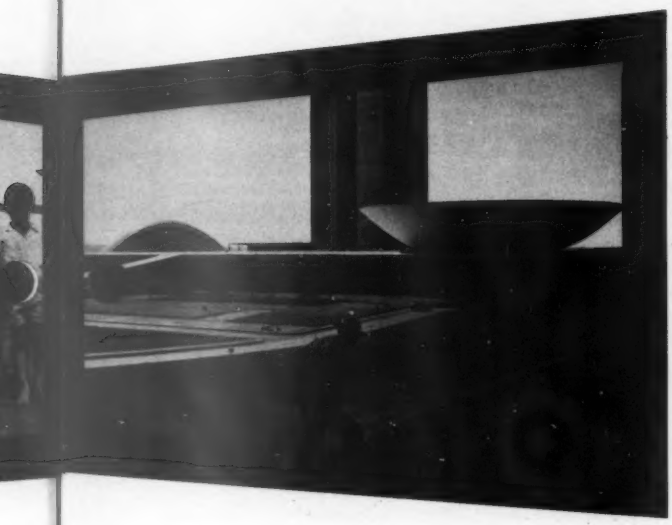
Research by Volunteers is compatible with Peace Corps goals.

One of the goals of the Peace Corps, as stated in the Peace Corps Act, is "to help people of such (interested) countries and areas meet their needs for trained manpower." There is clearly a need for trained manpower to develop the methodology of urban CD. The problem is that the countries where the Peace Corps works do not see this need as clearly as they see, for example, their need for agricultural engineers. However, host country institutions, such as schools of social work and university departments of sociology, can hardly avoid recognizing the need to improve the methodology of urban CD. Their countries' recognition

of that need would probably increase if they could participate with the Peace Corps in meeting it. With respect to the realization of the second Peace Corps goal of increasing mutual understanding, there would be little difference between the work of Volunteer researchers and other Volunteers.

UCDR would begin to meet the need for understanding urban social development and would stimulate similar efforts in host countries.

Peace Corps Volunteer researchers would probably stimulate in host country institutions an interest in urban CD research in the same way that, in Honduras, it has stimulated an interest in CD generally. In other words, Peace Corps efforts to develop the methodology of urban CD will probably result in similar host country efforts. This effect could be increased by having host country institutions co-sponsor projects in UCDR. Such an arrangement would have the additional advantage of avoiding any impression that the Volunteer researchers might be doing undercover investigations for intelligence agencies.



Paul Conklin

Volunteer researchers would be less frustrated and more effective than normal urban CD Volunteers.

Doing research would decrease the frustration of the urban CD Volunteer in two ways. First, the Volunteer researcher would have more realistic goals and his chances of achieving them would be greater: instead of being asked to cook without a cookbook as is the normal urban CD Volunteer, the Volunteer researcher would be asked to develop and test recipes which would be combined with the recipes of others to form a cookbook. Second, the chances of the Volunteer researcher's work having some long-run effect would be greater, since he would be affecting not only the barrio in which he was working, but also the other barrios where the results of his research could be applied in the future.

The first UCDR projects overseas should be trial projects.

Several trial UCDR projects should be sent overseas in order to determine how well they work, and to provide a clearer picture of the training and field support Volunteer researchers will need. Since the initiation of projects is the prerogative of host countries and their respective Peace Corps contingents, the idea of UCDR projects should be presented by Peace Corps Washington to country directors as an alternative to submitting projects for straight urban CD projects, particularly in those countries where urban CD projects have not been successful. Support for the idea from Peace Corps Washington is also necessary if the first projects are to receive the resources and evaluation necessary to develop UCDR projects to the point where they are fairly standard projects, effective in producing material on the methodology of urban CD, and in taking full advantage of the Volunteers working in them. Ideally, trial projects would initially be accepted in several large, relatively close cities, such as Bogotá, Guayaquil and Lima, in order to economize on personnel in field support and evaluation, and to facilitate exchange of information between projects.

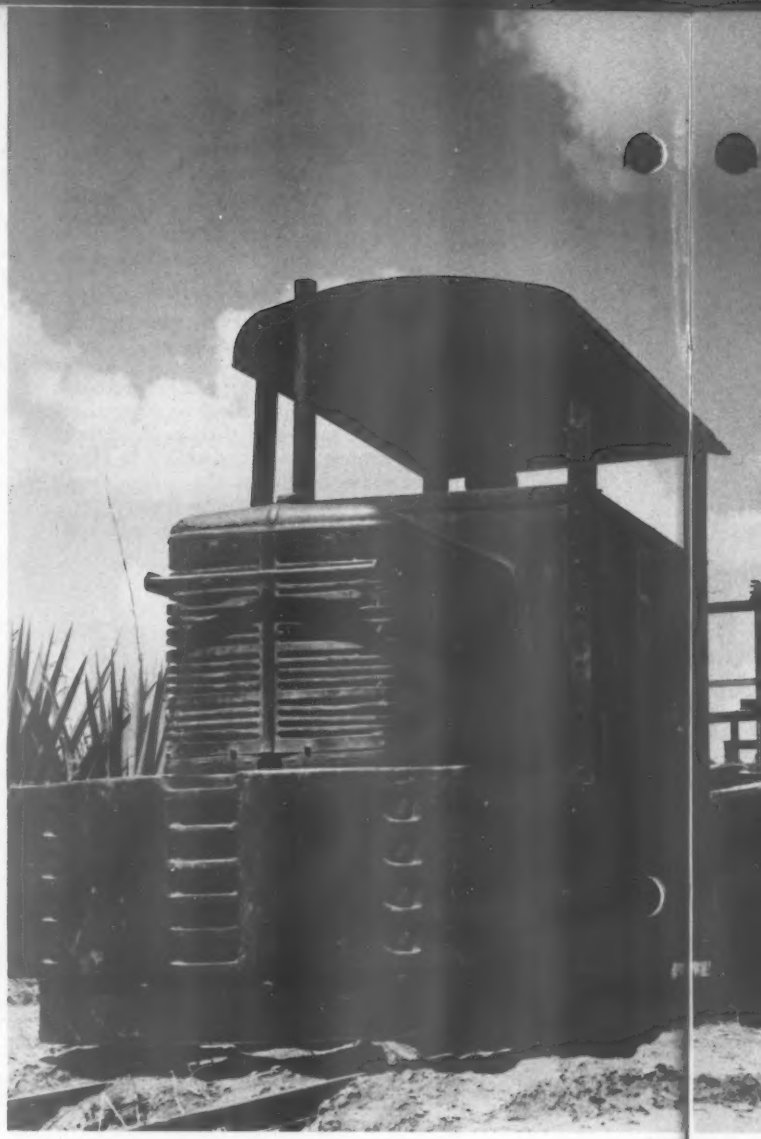
Assuming trial UCDR projects are successful, UCDR project requests should be encouraged in proportion to the effect the Peace Corps wants to have on cities.

Urban CD can potentially help cities in two ways. First, it can help develop the community-level government that is essential to responsible city government. Second, it can use the unemployed time of barrio dwellers in the works of urban infrastructure that are necessary to improve living conditions in the barrios: water and sewer systems, streets, etc. Given the potential value of urban CD in developing urban government and physical infrastructure, and the apparent lack of other means of achieving these ends, investment of Volunteer time in the development of the methodology of urban CD seems justified. Assuming that the trial UCDR projects demonstrate that Volunteer researchers can effectively develop the methodology of urban CD, then UCDR project requests should be encouraged by Peace Corps Washington, in direct proportion to the effect which the Peace Corps hopes to have on the development of cities.

Patrick Hare is a graduate of the Department of Design of Southern Illinois University. As a Volunteer he is an assistant in urban regional planning in the Economic Planning Council of Honduras, and also works on a barrio improvement committee. He was assisted in the preparation of this article by Sigrid Brooks, Pam Edd and other members of the Peace Corps in Honduras.

A former staff member sets forth a comprehensive model for a new Peace Corps role of rural transformation on the continent of Africa. His approach calls for major alterations in agency programming, training and spending.

A wider role in rural Africa



By FREDERIC C. THOMAS

Rural transformation implies a basic organic change in the rural milieu and not merely improvement. To say that the Peace Corps is promoting such transformation by placing Volunteers in villages to do useful projects and change attitudes is inaccurate and even presumptuous. Their activities may produce some beneficial effects, but one can't assume that a basic transformation of the rural community will result.

If the Peace Corps is serious about having a part in transforming rural communities in Africa, it should reject imprecise concepts (such as community development and *animation rurale*) and concentrate on the critical factors in bringing about change. It should recognize the fact that rural Africa cannot modernize as long as the mass of population is preoccupied with the most rudimentary subsistence needs. In fact, rural transformation requires the introduction of the rural African into cash economy, and programs must be directed towards this goal: by increasing agricultural production, improving marketing facilities, and training young Africans in the skills relevant to these economic needs. These are the critical factors. Social infrastructure needs, such as nutrition, health education and better schools, though beneficial to Africans and appealing to the Peace Corps, are of strictly secondary importance.

This is not to suggest that the Peace Corps should discontinue what it is doing in Africa; only that it shouldn't assume that rural-based endeavors constitute per se a strategy of rural transformation. The Peace Corps must obviously continue to mount a diverse range of teaching and non-teaching projects, at least until such time that it is ready to make the necessary commitment to rural transformation.

Certain key considerations must be taken into account when analyzing what is needed for rural transformation:

Over the next ten years African development will depend mainly upon increased agricultural production.

"(Peace Corps) should recognize the fact that rural Africa cannot modernize as long as the mass of population is preoccupied with the most rudimentary subsistence needs."

Greater output of food, livestock and other agricultural commodities is needed to increase farm incomes, to provide capital for investment in agriculture as well as in non-agricultural production, and to provide foreign exchange for importing capital and consumer goods.

More than 80 per cent of the African population is engaged today in subsistence agriculture and stock raising. Their inclusion in the market economy is contingent upon the production and marketing of larger food surpluses and more cash crops.

Since there is little prospect of developing labor-intensive industries in Africa, the growing pool of urban unemployed will become an increasingly serious problem over the next ten years unless large numbers of school leavers can find jobs in agriculture.

Improvements in nutrition and public health services will result in drastic increases in population growth, and the present low level of food production and technology will be unable to cope with this increased demand.

Africans have amply demonstrated in the past that they are prepared to remain on the land and accept innovations, such as new crops, if there is an economic incentive.

These five points suggest both the direction in which African development must move and the context within which a rural transformation strategy must operate. The elements of the strategy will become clearer as we examine what the Peace Corps must do.

The Peace Corps must decide that it wants to assist in the solution of critical development problems.

The emphasis hitherto has been on finding satisfying jobs for Volunteers. The Volunteer must be busy, speak the language and interact with the local people. As much stress is placed on the learning experience and cross-cultural dialogue as on tangible accomplishment.

Hopefully, in the course of the Volunteer's job and his interaction with Africans, some benefits will accrue to the recipient government or community. The Peace Corps doesn't expect much precision in calculating these benefits, as recent experience with the Programming-Planning-Budgeting System (PPBS) has shown. This is partly because many persons in the Peace Corps feel that measurable accomplishment is not what really counts.

However, any analysis of the poverty of the African peasant cannot avoid the primary importance of improving his productive capacity. To overlook this economic precondition on the grounds that it is outside the competence of the Peace Corps is tantamount to admitting that the Peace Corps can only play a tangential and relatively insignificant part in rural transformation. Likewise, it is unrealistic to equate efforts, such as in literacy and child nutrition, with rural transformation and accord them the same priority as projects designed to increase African production. With its present orientation, the Peace Corps can give priority to non-critical areas as long as they offer a satisfying Volunteer experience and some benefit to the host nation. But were the emphasis squarely on development, the Peace Corps would have to give proper weight to the key factors in rural transformation.

In Africa at least, the Peace Corps should concentrate on fulfilling the first purpose of the Act in the knowledge that in any event the other purposes will be served.

Until now the Peace Corps has operated with a confusion of aims. Its first purpose was to help countries meet their needs for trained manpower. Here the Peace Corps has had only partial success. A limited pool of applicants, restrictions on training, as well as programming considerations (such as the need that the jobs be reasonably satisfying) have limited the ability of the Peace Corps to respond to host country manpower needs. When PPBS was implemented the focus shifted more to the solution of development problems rather than merely filling manpower needs. This implied more interest than before in providing effective technical assistance. However, PPBS doesn't deny the importance of the second and third purposes of the Act. So if there is any doubt about its ability to deal with the problems of development, the Peace Corps can at least take heart in the fact that increasing numbers of Volunteers are serving abroad and thus fulfilling the second and third purposes.

This confusion of objectives is reflected in the field. Programs avoid the more obvious economic development needs, where solutions are known, and concentrate on value systems, which will take generations to change. Assignments are justified on the grounds of maximum contact with host country nationals or simply the need to find something for the Volunteer to do.

The Africa Region should decide that the purpose of rural transformation programs is to assist significantly in increasing rural productivity and income. Then, projects can be designed in such a way as to relate directly to this purpose. Project goals can be limited in concept, relatively short-term and achievable.

The strategy of rural transformation should be based on the short-term economic needs of the African village rather than long-term social change.

In rural Africa the Peace Corps is not concerned with communities which are in social and political ferment but with overly traditional peasant society in a subsistence economy. Under these conditions there is more likelihood of effecting economic changes than in bringing about social change, at least over the short haul. Although peasants in Africa as elsewhere are generally conservative, they do respond to economic incentives. African farmers will experiment with cash crops and young men will migrate to the coast or to the mines in order to earn money.

It is important to concentrate on fairly short-term goals in order to get results and to establish credibility. Moreover, short-term goals imply working with existing institutions, whereas long-term objectives usually necessitate basic institutional changes, such as changes in land use systems and labor migration patterns. Also, stress on the latter tends to perpetuate the kind of vagueness which has characterized the Peace Corps programs to date. It is almost impossible to submit such programs to cost/benefit analysis because of the difficulty of ascribing values to long-term social benefits. This precludes any hard evaluation of what the Peace Corps is acomplishing, and the task of establishing credibility is rendered more difficult.

The strategy of rural transformation should concentrate on a limited number of problems which are widespread rather than allowing programs to be dictated by what appear to be unique variants of each country.

As a first step in developing competence in rural transformation, the Peace Corps should concern itself more with problem-solving rather than job-filling. When actual programming begins, interest is centered on filling jobs. Considerable emphasis is placed on the special nature of host country needs and the unique conditions which are encountered in a particular ministry or technical service. This results in a highly compartmentalized, country-by-country approach to implementation and costly training and technical support requirements.

Instead, the Peace Corps should develop a broader perspective of Africa and identify problems which affect the great mass of the rural population. Programming should start with ecological regions which have more relevance than national boundaries in the process of rural transformation. An analysis of the regional context rather than the country situation would reveal certain problems to which the Peace Corps could address itself and certain solutions which are universally applicable.

To illustrate this point: the vast Sahelian-Sudanian belt of Africa, determined by latitude and rainfall, might be treated as a single problem area. All or part of eight countries, from Senegal to the Ethiopian escarpment, fall within this belt. While the political orientation and urban cultural milieu differs in each, the environment of the subsistence farmer, who has been least touched by colonialism and modernization, is remarkably constant over this vast area.

Where conditions permit, the emphasis should be placed on cash crop production and marketing and possibly even on a single farm commodity which is in widespread demand.

Surveys of African development repeatedly stress the need for increased cash income to the farmer if modernization is to take place. Linked to this is the importance of commodities which contribute to meeting the main nutritional deficiencies of the population.

There are also practical advantages in concentrating on cash crops. Credit is more readily available for seed, fertilizer and other inputs than in the case of food crops. Also, the farmer who has sold produce is probably more receptive to innovations and incentives than one who is inexperienced with an outside market.

Some agricultural commodities may not be appropriate, as far as the Peace Corps is concerned, such as peanuts and coffee which are in world surplus and depend upon artificially high support prices. Also, these are often the crops which receive most attention from marketing boards and companies which also provide technical assistance to the producer.

Improvement in cattle production and marketing, although of great potential importance in the economies of the Sahelian-Sudanian zone and parts of East Africa, may not lend itself to Peace Corps involvement.

On the other hand, there are certain farm commodities which deserve special attention by the Peace Corps. These include poultry raising, vege-

table and rice production, and the development of fish farms and cooperatives.

The nature of Peace Corps involvement in rural transformation must depend upon the extent to which the necessary conditions for agricultural development are present in each country.

The Peace Corps should start with an inventory of its project choices in the area of rural transformation. This would most obviously include extension work, agricultural education, cooperatives and rural public works. The proper choice or "mix" of projects in a country will depend upon the extent to which the necessary conditions for agricultural development are present.

What are the essential conditions? First, there is need for research to develop high yield. Second, there must be extension services to transmit the results of this research to the producers. Third, certain critical inputs, such as improved varieties of seed, chemical fertilizers, implements and machinery must be available at reasonable prices. Fourth, the provision of credit is essential for crop financing, the purchase of equipment and farm improvements. Fifth, an infrastructure of public works, such as irrigation and drainage canals, storage facilities and feeder roads, has direct bearing on the expansion of production and the marketing of produce. Sixth, marketing incentives, such as price policy and marketing boards, are needed to assure the producer an adequate return.

African nations are relatively deficient in all these conditions. Hence, the Peace Corps must become involved in a range of interdependent activities and provide support at various critical points if it really hopes to do much good. It must be able to implement the appropriate project "mix" in each country: for example, some Volunteers in extension work, others in cooperatives, and others on feeder road construction. Although the techniques they employ will be the same as in other countries, the "mix" will naturally depend upon local circumstances.

Priority should be given to public works projects which directly relate to increased agricultural production and sales.

In building schools and casing wells the Peace Corps is concerned with basic human needs in Africa, but it is not addressing itself to the priority requirements of rural transformation. A wider range of projects including schools, wells and other social infrastructure, will be needed in settlement areas. Because of the imbalance between geographic distribution of resources and population, migration and settlement will have to play an important part in mobilizing Africa's latent resources. The Peace Corps can help in places where settlement depends upon opening up roads and water resources, in clearing fields and planning villages.

Rural transformation is timed to the adoption by peasants of certain rudimentary agricultural innovations, and it is consequently a long and unspectacular process. Therefore, public works projects can have an important impact value. They serve to mobilize the people to realize their potential and make them more receptive to other innovations. Otherwise, people tend to lose interest. Hence, public works projects which stress self-help have a valuable part in rural transformation, but they should never detract from the underlying economic necessity of increasing farm production and income. It would be a mistake to assume that just because people are active on self-help activities a fundamental transformation of the rural economy is taking place.

Peace Corps programs should be designed to make the school a center for rural development.

Elementary education in the countryside must be designed to adapt the individual to serve the community to which he belongs if only to stem the

"Training young Africans in skills relevant to economic needs is a critical factor."

flow of unemployed school leavers to the cities. Hence, the school must provide the rudiments of general knowledge within the framework of African conditions. This implies teachers who know something about agriculture and teaching materials which are designed for Africans rather than for European children.

Only certain types of "health projects" are relevant to rural transformation.

The goal of rural transformation dictates that highest priority be given to projects which most directly increase economic productivity. The productivity of rural areas is, of course, increased through roads and bridges, through improvement in the storing of grain, and in eradication of pests and rodents which otherwise consume a fifth or more of the entire harvest. At the same time such measures directly benefit the health of people who otherwise will die because roads are washed out during the rainy season and they can't get medical attention or because rats are the vectors of disease.

Rural productivity is also increased as the environment in which Africans live and work is improved. Again, projects which have economic as well as health implications are most appropriate. The construction of wells which permit some irrigation and the growing of fruit trees for the first time, in addition to providing safe water for drinking and washing, thus eliminating water-born parasites, is certainly preferable to a latrine construction program which has no direct economic benefit. The provision of village water supplies is also appropriate because there is immediate improvement in people's lives without necessitating any major adaptation on their part. Conversely, efforts to influence the care of children, the preparation of food, and keeping the home clean are invariably less successful because they involve ingrained habits which cannot be easily changed. This is not to say, however, that environmental sanitation projects shouldn't include health education as an integral part.

A third health category which has a direct relationship to rural transformation are those nutrition projects which combine economic and social objectives. The increase in food production which is essential to rural transformation must be selective and directed especially toward eliminating the main nutritional deficiencies. In Africa these are mostly related to insufficient protein consumption. Therefore, projects designed to increase the production of poultry, fish and vegetables, especially pulses which are high in protein, have the dual advantage of diversifying agricultural output while at the same time combating malnutrition.

To regard other than these types of projects as critical to the rural transformation process would be to reflect a lack of precision in evaluating African priorities. While immunization programs indirectly effect rural productivity by reducing the incidence of debilitating diseases, measures to control the most critical of these diseases (particularly malaria and bilharzia) are probably beyond the competence and resources of African governments, even with outside help, because of the magnitude and complexity of the environmental changes which are neded. The diseases with which African governments and the Peace Corps can cope (such as tuberculosis, smallpox and polio) are of a lesser priority. While unquestionably serious, they do not impair the productivity of anywhere as large a part of the population as do malaria, bilharzia, water-born parasites and malnutrition. Nor does immunization against these less serious diseases produce any immediate economic benefits to the rural community.

The Peace Corps should be prepared to establish rural youth training centers on an experimental basis.

More so in Africa than elsewhere the Peace Corps has always tried to work within the framework and limitations of host government institutions. It recognizes the danger of exercising too great an influence and not allowing Africans to acquire the self-confidence and skills needed to carry on the job. The danger of assuming too much responsibility is especially real because there is still in Africa a residue of exaggerated respect for the European and a habit of deprecating the African's capacity for disciplined work.

Where host government services are thinly spread, undeveloped or impoverished, the Peace Corps has reluctantly limited its involvement, or it has chosen to work in an area of lesser priority which has the capacity to absorb more Volunteers. The heavy involvement of the Peace Corps in teaching is largely due to the capacity of school systems to use Volunteers with a minimum amount of dislocation.

If the Peace Corps decides to contend with the critical problems of rural transformation, it must be prepared to modify its present stance and assume more positive responsibilities. The very problems with which the Peace Corps is concerned persist in large measure because of an institutional inability to contend with them. The Peace Corps must show more imagination and initiative in devising ways to meet the deficiency. It should be especially concerned with the gulf which exists between research and training centers at the national and provincial level and the mass of the peasantry who should be the beneficiaries. There is usually no effective way of transmitting the results of research and technology to the cultivator.

Rural transformation is a massive undertaking, but obviously the Peace Corps can't dump large numbers of Volunteers on services which are unable to support them. Therefore, the Peace Corps should consider establishing its own training centers. They would function along the lines which have already been developed by Israelis, West Germans, and other aid missions, except that the Peace Corps model would be more modest in concept and more intimately linked to the immediate needs of the rural population. The centers could function under the aegis of the appropriate ministry, utilizing land which has been donated by the government or the people themselves. Trainees drawn from surrounding villages could work part-time on their own plots, using proper equipment and techniques. Thus the land would be used both for training and profit with a view to making the enterprise ultimately self-supporting. The center could include a wide range of ancillary activities, such as a cooperative store, literacy classes, and a shop for carpentry and metalwork. The national development bank would be asked to finance the initial

supply of seed, fertilizer, poultry, implements, etc., to get the farm started. National youth organizations or service corps would also have particular relevance to this type of enterprise.

Regional program offices should be established in Africa.

Peace Corps programming in Africa is not much better today than it was during the first years of operation. This is due to many factors. Certainly the high turnover of an overseas staff which is largely preoccupied with day-to-day operations is a major one.

However, the strategy of rural transformation, if seriously applied, requires a much more sophisticated and long-term type of programming. It necessitates the collection and analysis of data, investigation of bilateral and multilateral aid in agriculture and related fields, cost/benefit analysis of alternative programs, and definition of job requirements and the sequence in which innovations should be introduced. This in turn would entail close cooperation with the various ministries, UN agencies, institutions and companies which are concerned with rural development.

This work can only be done in the field. However, it can't be done by overseas staffs which have neither the time nor the necessary perspective to program on a regional basis.

Therefore, regional program offices should be set up, initially in two cities, such as Lagos or Abidjan for West Africa and Addis Ababa or Nairobi for East Africa. Each office would need an experienced agriculturist and a public health physician (or educator) and a few ex-Volunteers who have experience in rural Africa and an interest in development economics. These offices would be responsible for researching and developing rural transformation programs with reference to regional conditions. The program staffs, individually or collectively, would travel extensively throughout the region and have contact with all agencies, national and international, public and private, which are concerned with rural development. In each country they would work through the Peace Corps staff and their host government contacts and also through the Volunteers and their contacts in defining tasks and techniques involved in each project. They would undertake investigations on their own and coordinate studies being done by Volunteers in the field, as well as using the facilities of African universities and institutes with research interests and experience in Africa. In short, they would assume the full gamut of programming responsibilities outlined here. The implementation of this strategy would largely depend upon them.

Training should be increasingly handled on a regional basis and involve African universities.

Training should seek to prepare Volunteers for a set of problems encountered in tropical and arid zones rather than to fill jobs in a certain country. There is a range of training content which has general application, especially when the Peace Corps restricts its scope to certain kinds of interdependent activities and innovations and even to certain agricultural commodities.

Of course, there will always be some technical training elements, just as there are language requirements, which are unique to the particular country. Ideally, such training should be handled overseas where it can be done most realistically and efficiently and probably at less cost. For this purpose the Peace Corps should turn increasingly to African universities to contract the overseas portion of training.

The universities might also provide continuing technical support to Peace Corps projects. Volunteers, working with African undergraduates, might assist in university-sponsored research relating to rural transformation. Outstanding Volunteers might serve a third year abroad as assistant lecturers at the university. Thus, the Peace Corps can assist in implementing President Johnson's pledge to make certain African universities "regional centers of training and professional excellence." A closer working relationship with African universities would also benefit the Peace Corps in broadening the base of its acceptance in Africa.

A serious commitment to rural transformation will entail greater expenditures of material and money than present Peace Corps legislation permits.

AID has invested over $2,000 for each Volunteer in the Togo fisheries project. Experience in Guinea indicates that it costs almost $4,000 for a Volunteer to get a poultry station started on a commercially viable basis. At least $5,000 worth of material support will be needed for each Volunteer involved in the Upper Volta well construction program.

These figures only suggest the magnitude of capital assistance needed for the type of projects which the Peace Corps may undertake. They don't include, of course, the value of human and material support which comes from the host government and the local community. While there are a few countries, such as Kenya, which may be able to support fairly substantial numbers of Volunteers in rural projects, most nations will need external financing along with the technical and management skills of Volunteers.

The Peace Corps should determine the costs involved in rural transformation. This includes not only the inputs of the Peace Corps and the host country but also financing from outside. When it knows the cost of alternative approaches to problems, the Peace Corps can speak authoritatively with host governments and have a part in their development planning. It can approach development banks, foundations, and other sources for financial support. It can become a catalyst in the rural transformation process rather than a mere adjunct to limited and fragmentary endeavors.

This article was adapted from a paper by the author titled, "A Strategy for Rural Transformation in Africa," which has been the subject of considerable discussion in the Peace Corps, most recently at the Africa Regional Directors Conference in the Ivory Coast. Frederic C. Thomas had wide experience as a scholar and businessman in Africa before joining the Peace Corps in 1961. Included in his six-year career with the agency were tours as country director in Morocco and Somalia. He was a Fulbright and a Ford Foundation research scholar and holds a doctorate from the University of London. He is now with the Food for Peace program in Amman, Jordan.

Two parents suggest ways to enhance the

Communication from home

What does a Peace Corps Volunteer need from home? Time, distance and bureaucracy prevent providing creature comforts, but the thin airmail letter seems to penetrate most barriers. This flimsy paper is the only weapon, or contact, available to most parents, and with it comes a great responsibility.

If we accept this responsibility, it means the end of the plaintive letters to camps and schools with the messages like "get your hair cut—don't stay up all night" and other trivia. It means we must now embark on providing a real communication need. For most parents this means a concerted effort to pull their heads out of the sand of American life and take a good look at the changing world around them.

After the newness of the strange place has receded, the Volunteer has time to reflect on the basic questions of our time, and it is at this point when our efforts in communication can be of value. The fact that most Volunteers inadvertently disclose a sense of receptivity by saying they have a "feeling of being outside looking in" means they are in a frame of mind startlingly different from the "in" feeling at home. This can happen in spite of how busy they may be physically, and how involved mentally and emotionally they are in their new environment.

This separation from family and country is a magnified version of what they feel on first leaving home—for college, military service or a job. Being sensitive to what we hear from them—or do not hear—is the best clue to what we write, but it is most important that we strengthen them where they are weak, and by an intuitive sixth sense, maybe realize the lack in their present lives.

Of course a knowledgeable father may offer factual advice on removal of a transmission or replacement of a thrown rod (without proper tools), or suggest remedies for crop failure or a bad business venture, or ways to remove a barrier in a teaching communication problem, but these are exceptions. Volunteers have been trained by their education to know, or to know where to find, answers—not necessarily answers to other problems such as lonesomeness for congenial companions, hunger for love and understanding (besides home cooking). (As one Volunteer reports: "It is not the physical discomforts; we never cease to be amazed at how we survive them.")

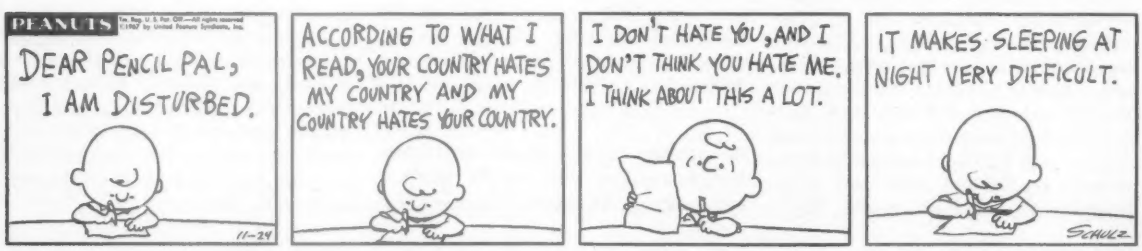
A clipping service

This is a time to test our religion, moral convictions and ethics and to spice letters with whichever of these seem pertinent. One thing that can be important is conferring attitudes on happenings in this country as reported to Volunteers by news media, Peace Corps headquarters' reports and propaganda published or passed along in the host country. In this respect we are challenged to keep abreast of the most accurate reporting in this country, and pass along our judgment of the best of it through newspaper clippings and articles not available to them. The "other side" of the story is often enlightening and even comforting, and we must remember that the "other side" is what is lacking.

Who of us feels qualified to pass along dogmatic facts and solutions? We do not mean this. We suggest a debate, conflicting reports by accurate, well-informed people on problems in this country. These receive scandalous press releases in many foreign countries and need to be toned down. This is not to provide Volunteers with fuel for argument, but to satisfy a question in their own minds. First of all, in this category, no doubt, comes the war in Vietnam. How would you like to defend American policy in an accusing foreign country when the facts escape you yourself? Other questions concern the race riots, ghetto solutions, ridiculous extravagances versus overt poverty, and (a never-ending subject of foreign press) gossip of the Kennedy and Johnson families. And at this date, we are sure, the most important concern to the young male Volunteer is the status of the draft and military service. Judicious reading and clipping is not apt to get out of hand, due to limitations caused by foreign airmail rates!

We do not mean that we can give answers, but after all, this thoughtful, constant researching for answers puts us in positions to include some personal homespun philosophy or judicial comments, and is in order. We might be surprised at what our children will accept and welcome from us with this sincere background for comments.

Expressed faith in character and


PEANUTS
DEAR PENCIL PAL, I AM DISTURBED.
11-29
ACCORDING TO WHAT I READ, YOUR COUNTRY HATES MY COUNTRY AND MY COUNTRY HATES YOUR COUNTRY.
I DON'T HATE YOU, AND I DON'T THINK YOU HATE ME. I THINK ABOUT THIS A LOT.
IT MAKES SLEEPING AT NIGHT VERY DIFFICULT.
SCHULZ

Courtesy of The Washington Post

By PRESTON and
MAURINE LAMPTON

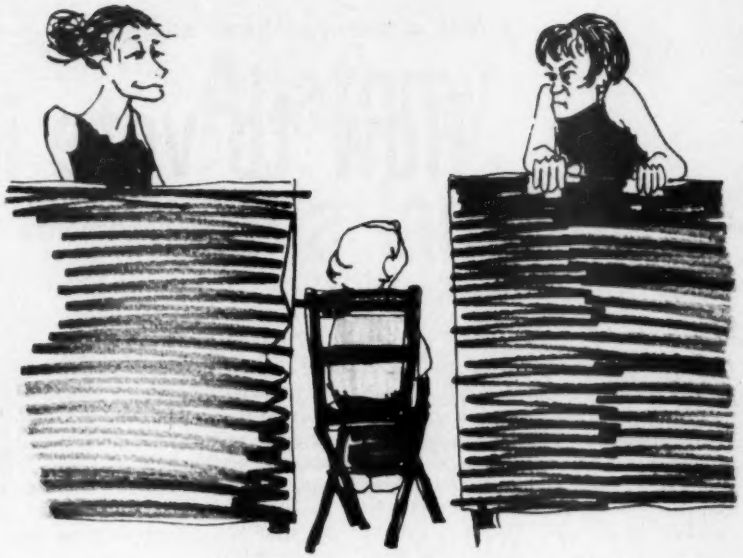
ability never hurt anyone, and encouraging words and the underplaying rather than overplaying of what they are missing at home also help. This is really easy when you start to point out things they are lucky to be missing and the restlessness of the young people who are not diverted by physical or mental frustration caused by concern for others.

Curtail the zeal

We think THE VOLUNTEER is terrific, and we parents are lucky to be able to peruse copies. By doing this, and, if possible, sorting out all the various reactions of Volunteers overseas, returned, etc., we may be able even more accurately to discover what the good word really should be from us to them. One thing we are fairly sure of is that it should be often, erudite, warm and encouraging, perhaps reminding them of the exuberance with which they first tackled the job and the knowledge *then* that they could never be all things to all people and that if they were "just a little to just a few," they would be contributing just as planned.

If these are our children, they surely received some stimulus in their lifetime to embark on such a mission, from home and family, and it is up to us to exude these open, optimistic, kindly attitudes in our letter writing, even though we may have grown somewhat crusty with age and outlook. So many older people still show a warm flush of remembered zeal for a project such as the Peace Corps, thus fostering this *image* idea. We can show our children that we are not overcome by the "white charger" picture of Super Volunteer and that we are concerned mostly that their work be self-satisfying and worthwhile to them even though in a nebulous and paltry way. Letter writing does take time, but this can be worthwhile time, for them and for us.

The Lamptons are members of that "minority opinion block" known as Peace Corps Volunteer Parents (PCVPs).



Here is how Upper Volta Volunteer Norman Skougstad portrayed his Foreign Service Institute language test in training. He called the S-test "Kafka revisited."

'Drowning in paper'

About 30 college students worked at Peace Corps headquarters last summer under an intern program. Here are some comments they made about their experience:

"It was a good job, but I just wasn't intellectually very excited by it."

◆ ◆ ◆

"My attitude has changed. It's a little less 'great' than I thought before. My advice is to close down Peace Corps Washington, have about five people here to hand out airline tickets and first aid kits to Volunteers and wish the Volunteers good luck. There is too much duplication, too much waste, etc."

◆ ◆ ◆

"I have become quite committed to, and fairly knowledgeable about the Peace Corps. As a result of working here this summer, there is a great likelihood that I will serve as a Volunteer overseas, and that I will go back to my campus and do my share of 'recruiting.' I don't know if I've been 'corrupted,' 'co-opted' or 'convinced,' but I have very definitely been 'sold' on the value of Peace Corps service."

"I have been disappointed at times to see the bureaucratic tentacles reaching in Peace Corps offices. But I have been generally impressed by the calibre of individuals who work in Peace Corps Washington."

◆ ◆ ◆

"It's very hard to say whether it was the way I lived, the really new opportunities the city itself presented, or the office itself that opened my mind like it was opened this summer. I tend to think it was a combination of all this—and the *message* was a disturbing, fascinating, frightening, beautiful, challenging, discouraging (all at once) discovery of much I'd known before and much of me I hadn't seen before. The medium in every case was *people;* learning to be more than tolerant, to gain an understanding, an insight, into the value of any mind and the integrity of any personality."

◆ ◆ ◆

"I wish the Peace Corps could empty all its files and start all over again. We're drowning in paper."

A look at the regulations and guidelines which help explain

How to vote in '68

By ELIZABETH WHITE

For many Volunteers and staff members, the right to vote has become a privilege granted to the lucky or persevering few. There are many reasons for this, including a lack of concern or interest on the part of some for state regulations governing absentee voting, poor performance by the Peace Corps in getting the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to the field in time, and a very complex and lengthy procedure for filing the FPCA and absentee ballot when Volunteers do it through Peace Corps channels.

In the 1966 elections an estimated 2,759 Peace Corps staff and Volunteers voted out of a total 10,677 who were eligible. I believe the estimate was high and that considerably fewer people actually had their ballots in to election headquarters in time to be counted.

Obstacles persist

A number of factors, some of them out of the control of individual Peace Corps members or the agency or both, have and will continue to discourage interested persons from exercising their right to vote. Certain obstacles will persist in the 1968 primaries and general election. These are:

Some Peace Corps members will be unable to vote because they come from states which require registration in person. Therefore, if they didn't register before leaving the United States or hadn't turned 21 years of age in order to be able to register, they cannot vote. These states include: New Jersey, Delaware, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma and Virginia.

Some states do not accept the FPCA as a registration and application for absentee ballot. These states include: New York, Arkansas, Arizona, Ohio, North Carolina, Rhode Island and Virginia. Therefore, it is useless to spend the time filing the FPCA which must be certified by a consular official only to have the local election board send its own registration forms, which also must be certified. It will save time if one writes directly to his election board requesting the forms for both registration and application for absentee ballot.

Alabama and Mississippi have regulations which preclude Volunteers from voting because one must vote in person in advance of the election.

The following states do not permit absentee voting in primaries: New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode Island. North Carolina does not permit absentee voting in its primary except for those who are members of the Armed Forces, their spouses, and Merchant Marine personnel.

Although one may register far enough in advance and file his application for an absentee ballot within the specified time provided by his state, there is the possibility that the absentee ballot may not reach the election board in time to be counted. The reason for this is that each state sets its own time limit for sending out absentee ballots. Volunteers from North Dakota, for example, must apply for an absentee ballot within 30 days before the election unless they are already qualified voters, in which case they simply must notify the county auditor of their current mailing address. North Dakota mails its absentee ballots to voters about 21 days prior to the election. Obviously this is not enough time for some Volunteers to receive and return their ballots.

Peace Corps has cooperated with other government agencies interested in bringing these problems to the attention of Congress and various state legislatures.

The questions each person who wishes to vote must ask with regard to the 1968 elections are:

Am I already registered? If not, may I register absentee?

Does my county or local election board have specific procedures different from the general state guidelines (this is true of some states such as New York)? What exactly are the procedures in my county?

Do I know the correct address of my election board (FPCAs have been returned to Peace Corps Washington for improper addresses)?

How long does my mail take to reach the U.S. and vice versa? The channels offered by Peace Corps Washington are time consuming and circuitous (Washington sends forms to the field office which in turn has Volunteer signatures certified and returns them to Washington for forwarding to the local election board) and it may be best to use the international mail system, asking the election board to send everything via air mail.

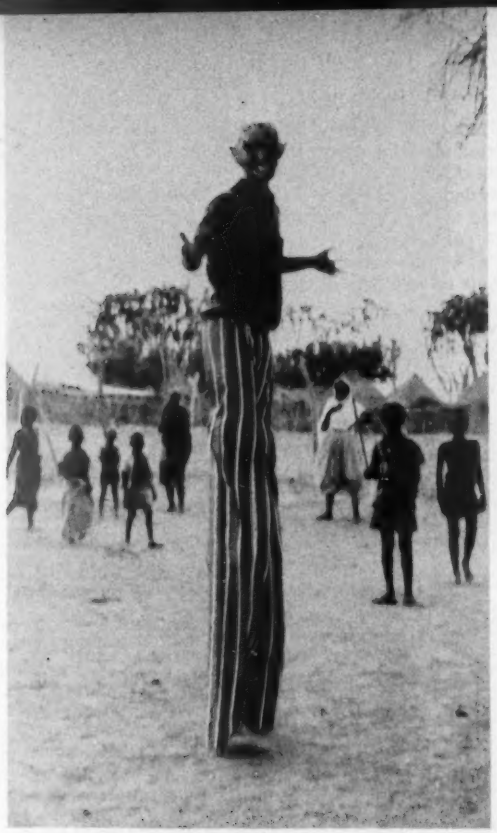
Self responsibility

If Peace Corps members intend to vote in 1968, they must accept the responsibility of becoming informed of their state and local election board regulations. This can be done only by contacting the local board. Peace Corps will provide certain services, such as the FPCA, registration and ballot certification and mailing and general voting information by state. These services will indeed enable some persons to vote, but if past experience is any guide, they will tend to inhibit others from voting. It is up to the individual to decide the best course of action, and to begin informing himself of pertinent regulations.

Elizabeth White is a liaison officer for the Peace Corps in Washington. She was a Volunteer in Tunisia.

Anatomy of a laugh

What makes Somalis laugh? Eight Peace Corps teachers who organized a traveling theatre and performed in several Somali towns last summer have some partial answers to that question: Somalis like to watch new faces and new antics; they like to see things thrown—banana peels, glasses and actors; and they enjoy most references to sex. Of the four plays performed—two in Somali, one pantomime and one cowboy skit in English—the villagers preferred those performed in their own language, while a capital city audience enjoyed the cowboy play best. Had time permitted, the Volunteers feel they would have revised several of their routines, not only in response to what they learned from the summer's audiences but also in an attempt to discover more about Somali humor.

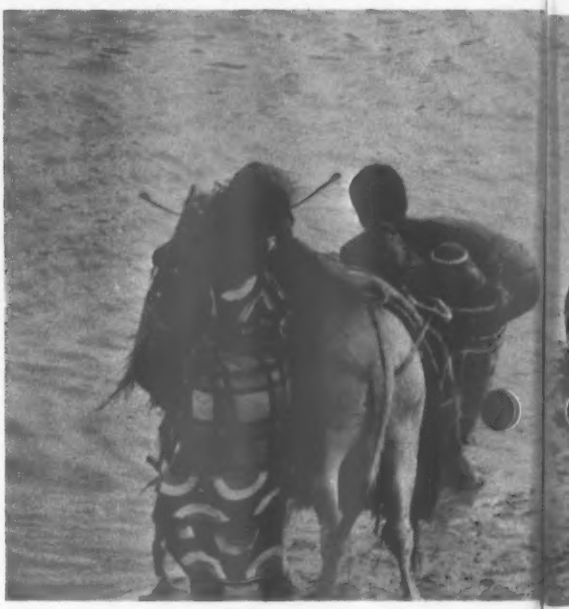


To attract an audience, one of the players donned a pair of 3-foot stilts, covered with red striped trousers. A red devil's mask completed the costume. Somalis were frightened, amused and mystified.

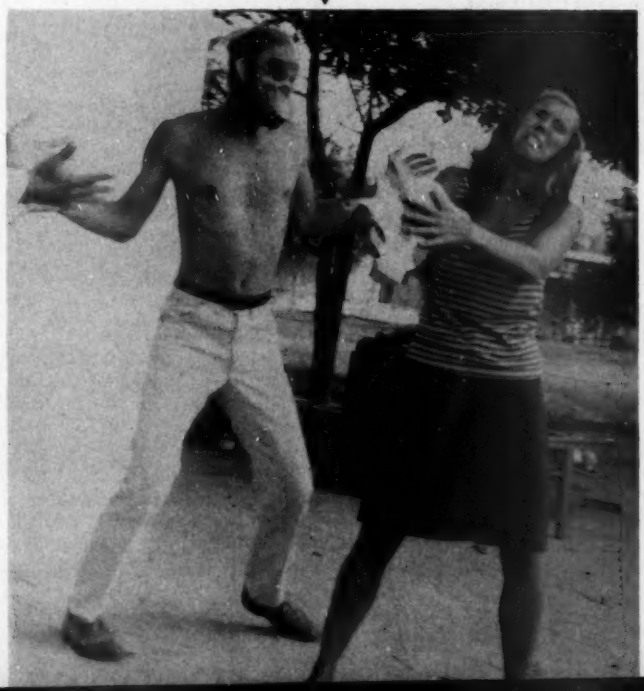
In one Somali play (above) a clever but unhappy witch, Sandra Braden, meets a lecherous nomad, David Rorick. In search of a husband (but first a dowry), she lures lechers into her amorous clutches, turning them into pigs with a kiss and stealing their camels for loot.

Below, barmaid Sandra Braden and tough guy Jerry Martin in cowboy skit, a parody of American Westerns.

In sequence at left, Deg-Der, a Somali cannibal woman played by Mrs. Braden, pretends to be hurt while a passing nomad (Martin) offers his help. He is rewarded by a knife in the back, dismembered, and added to Deg-Der's human meat supply. All the skits were composed by the troupers; Deg-Der was based on a widely known traditional Somali story. The players usually performed in front of a building which could double as backdrop and dressing room; entrances and exits were made behind two cloth screens on either side of the stage, which was roped off and lit by five tilley lanterns. Most costumes and scenery were made by the cast.



Somali villagers do chores at river bank.



In sequence at right, the misadventures of a monkey were related in a comic pantomime performed to tape-recorded honkey-tonk music. The antics of The Fool (played by Tom Braden) are interrupted when he is run over by a car driven by a dim-witted man (Martin, in hat) who is accompanied by his unsympathetic wife (Mrs. Braden). She is then harassed by an uninhibited monkey (Rorick). The cast often wondered if by their antics onstage they were not simply making fools of themselves in the eyes of Somali villagers, but the latter always showed up for performances, often early enough to watch the players set up the stage.

LETTERS TO THE VOLUNTEER

Marrying hosts

To The Volunteer:

I know that married Volunteers join the Peace Corps and Volunteers on occasion marry each other, but what about those two pictures: a Thai wife, a Malaysian husband? Certainly there must be more of a story here than the captions reveal, but I didn't find it. There have been several marriages in the Philippines between Volunteers and host nationals, and I imagine the same is true in other countries. Enough for several articles, perhaps. I'm interested: who, where, what happens . . . ?

Douglas Palmer
Sagada, Mountain Prov.,
Philippines

Political issue

To The Volunteer:

Stuart Awbrey's article, "Politics and the Peace Corps" (September), gives the impression that Volunteers have won, or re-established, the basic right of free speech. Experiences in Nigeria and a closer reading of the article suggest the opposite is true.

The Peace Corps terminated one Volunteer in Nigeria for unacceptable social behavior and a second in Chile for political involvement. Following the director's amendment to the policy on public statements Awbrey concludes "the Peace Corps reaffirmed the right of its members to exercise personal discretion." Is the exercise of personal discretion a cherished right? Normally to be discreet means to be careful in speech or action. Rather than guaranteeing a basic right, the Peace Corps has issued a warning: be careful what you say and do.

The issue is more than a semantic debate over personal discretion as a right or an imposed obligation. The conclusion that the Peace Corps has passed through a "classic crisis"—and "things would not be the same again" cannot be justified. Shortly before leaving Eastern Nigeria in July, Volunteers received copies of a State Department telegram clearly warning that those making political statements could not continue their service. If the lengthy policy re-evaluation by staff, returned Volunteers and trainees, followed by the director's clarification, did in fact alter policy, Volunteers abroad (at least in Eastern Nigeria) had no hint of such liberalization.

What rights do Volunteers have and where do they get them? Awbrey writes, "The sustaining power of the Peace Corps rests less in the hands of its shifting and occasionally indifferent constituencies than in its ideal . . . free speech is a cornerstone of that ideal." Two paragraphs later the editor reverses that stand by assuming each generation of Volunteers must win or lose its own rights, perhaps "as often as every two years." The second statement, though an accurate evaluation, heralds a dim future for Volunteers. Individuals join the Peace Corps not to reform a Washington bureaucracy to safeguard their own rights, but to contribute to the development of countries with limited traditions of such freedoms.

The Peace Corps ideal, described in such glowing terms, should enable a Volunteer to direct all his energies toward that goal, rather than demand his support for periodic administrative reforms.

Howard Tolley Jr.
Former Volunteer
Montclair, N.J.

A world record?

To The Volunteer:

The September issue prompted us to make a count of all of the Volunteers who have married here in Cuenca since the first group arrived. We discovered, to our surprise, that there have been 19 marriages, all between Volunteers and local girls.

We know that's a record for Ecuador, but what about the rest of the world?

William R. Masciarelli
Cuenca, Ecuador

CD snow job

To The Volunteer:

We don't have snow very often up here on the Bolivian Altiplano, but when it does come we Alaskans sure appreciate it.

The other day it did snow, and strong. So, bright and early we were up to a little kid's hut above the *pueblo* and there built him an Alaskan-type giant snowman. He'd never seen one before in his life, and he liked it. And so, apparently, did the rest of the town, because not more than three hours later, before the snow melted, there were several others just like it all over, and even one at the school. Holy smoke, we thought, Community Development!

If it *were* only that easy, huh?

Frank and Gay Keim
Tiquina, Bolivia

Off the soapbox

To The Volunteer:

I am thoroughly convinced that Peace Corps Volunteers should avoid host country politics, as well as our own national and international problems. I personally feel that there are sufficient social and economic obstacles to overcome in Chile to keep a Volunteer thoroughly occupied for two years. Consequently, while a Volunteer, one should not meddle in political affairs. The door to the Peace Corps swings both ways as we are all aware of the opportunity to terminate whenever we desire. I speak of those Peace Corps Volunteers who intentionally seek political debate. The Peace Corps Handbook hopes we will "answer detractors through hard work and accomplishments, not in political debate."

Regardless of whether Peace Corps Volunteers sense the need to voice their opinions, we must bear in mind that, although working independently, we as individuals will not be remembered as permanently as will the name of the Peace Corps. Consequently, our present actions will either benefit or destroy the efforts of future Volunteers. Peace Corps is constantly being discussed by host country nationals and many will pounce upon the slightest opportunity to degrade the organization. Therefore, to attain the status for which it was conceived, it

must exemplify a spirit of hard work and determination, prerequisites for the success of any developing nation.

Are we therefore a group of loud-mouthed soapbox orators, or did we join the Peace Corps to assist in providing the basic necessities with which nations will eventually support themselves? I honestly feel we too often forget the words of John F. Kennedy when we cry out for recognition: "The great impression of what kind of country we have and what kind of people we are will depend on their judgment of you."

LEE LEARDINI

Isla Santa Maria, Chile

A nurse speaks

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

The letters from the Afghanistan nurses and from John LoPinto which appeared in the August issue invite a response.

To teach nursing skills does not necessarily require a formal teaching position. By and large, nursing skills are demonstrated at the bedside, accompanied by explanations that can be (and ought to be) extended into clinical conferences and instructions in associated subjects. A strictly academic teaching position in "our nursing skills" could hardly replace the combined approach which includes the formal teaching function, the bedside demonstration, and close contact with the indigenous patient.

This threefold objective involves low-level labor for at least half of the Volunteer nurse's stay in the host country—until the local nurses have understood and accepted the changes, and become converts to the extent that they themselves begin to make suggestions for improvements.

It takes an immense will power and a daily renewed obsession of "I will and I have to succeed" in order to push on. Day in, day out, the "don't's" and the "do's" for the obvious (in our enlightened viewpoint) have to be repeated, until the Peace Corps nurse divines that she has not wrestled in vain. Truly, she has to stoop to conquer.

Peace Corps staff is not and cannot be in the position to make a clear-cut outline of the job that is awaiting the Peace Corps registered nurse. Only *she* can assess the situation and her opportunities, and respond to—or not grasp—the challenges presented.

To avert the disillusion of the prospective Peace Corps Volunteer nurse, it may be well to make clear the broad aspects of her role, in no uncertain terms, *during training*, so that she may come to grips with the fact of becoming a warrior rather than a mentor.

MARGARETE V. SILBERBERG
Former Volunteer

Bethesda, Md.

Housing problem: Mrs. Kit Porter, a Volunteer teacher, is shown drying out the linen after a typhoon hit Rota in the Marianas Islands. The Porter house and that of two other Volunteers were among the 90 per cent of the homes on the island that were wrecked in the storm, without serious injury to the 1,200 inhabitants.

What CD can do

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

What a fine grass roots approach Betty Hutchinson's October article represents. I thoroughly agree with her that community development Volunteers need a skill. Here in Bolivia we call it an identity. Our Volunteers with the National Community Development Agency all have a diploma and an I.D. card from the agency telling that they have passed a *cursillo* given by the agency in community development—community development as the host agency conceives it. This helps the Volunteer immensely to get an "in" into the *pueblos*. I believe that no Peace Corps Volunteer group should ever be sent into the field without the title of the program being CD, slash something or other (Public Health, Literacy, Sheep Shearing, Rural Construction, etc.).

An additional point with which I agree very much is that the injection of outside funds should not be considered as bad per se. It can be, if handled in a patron-paternalistic fashion, but it is exactly in this area where a well trained CD Volunteer can show his CD insights, his CD mettle by using the funds as seed money for getting self-help efforts off the ground.

I saw a school built with School Partnership funds of $1,000. Today a school stands in that place, worth over $3,000. It was that catalytic $1,000 that got the *pueblo* moving. Since then, they have built a bridge for the milk collection truck with the same system of self-help as they used for the school. In other words, the original outside input of money has generated all kinds of public works.

GINO BAUMANN
Director,
Peace Corps Bolivia

La Paz

Internationalize

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Arrogance of power and the close tie of the Peace Corps to United States government policy can be prevented by expanding the Peace Corps idea, by making it part of the international effort for peace and development.

We realize that the United States government cannot act unilaterally to make the Peace Corps an international effort. But it can propose in all multi-

lateral organizations, such as the United Nations, and in Latin America the Organization of American States, that such an International Peace Corps be created.

The creation of this international organization will take time, but the Peace Corps itself can take immediate action to make its programs bilateral. To do this, the Peace Corps must place itself at the disposal of host countries and offer their citizens at least equal voice in the programming and execution of Peace Corps activities within their borders. Committees, from a national one composed of host country citizens, Peace Corps staff, and Volunteers for the purpose of programming all activities to local ones for executing these activities, should be created. All pertinent documents such as the five-year plan should be unclassified. Preference should be hiring host country citizens as staff members. The Peace Corps should go only where sincerely requested and not as part of a United States foreign assistance package; stay only where there is mutual involvement and responsibility for its activities.

PAUL COWAN
RACHEL COWAN
RALPH CRAFT
JOYCE DODGE
WILLIAM DODGE
EDWARD FAGERLUND
WILLIAM HENNEMUTH
ANNE TOMPKINS
NICK ZYDYCRN

Guayaquil, Ecuador

'Volunteers are adults'

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I believe that the Peace Corps should have enough faith in its original judgment in inviting us to train, and do away completely with deselection. The role of the staff should be to train Volunteers and to counsel and advise. They should assume that the trainee is mature enough that, presented with the facts and the staff's opinion, he can decide for himself if he really wants to spend two years in his assigned country. Self-selection should be the only means of choosing Volunteers from trainees.

Having survived the ordeal of training (and it is an ordeal, as the spectre of selection soon overshadows training for one's post) the Volunteer might think he was at last free to serve. Arrival in his new country soon shatters this illusion. He learns that the role of policeman is now taken over by the in-country staff. Rather than to assist, the role of the staff is too often to restrict.

The staff must have the fortitude to assume that Volunteers are mature people with legitimate motives for coming. They must not try to impose their standards upon us, but should only offer counsel and advice whenever they feel a Volunteer is on the wrong track. Volunteers should be allowed to decide for themselves what is a valid vacation project and not have to meet the standards of the staff. Leave taken should be figured as the days of leave pay drawn. Except in extreme cases, such as violations of the law or requests by headmasters or other local officials for dismissal, self-termination should be the only means of ending service. In this context, self-termination should be made easier for the Volunteer with no red tape in Washington and the Peace Corps paying for the flight home.

In summary, I think Peace Corps Volunteers deserve to be treated as adults. I believe if Washington develops a little faith in the motives of its Volunteers and allows them freedom from these present restrictions, the results will benefit all concerned. The Volunteer will find more reward for himself because he will know that he has acted freely and not out of fear of those above him. More innovation and experimentation will naturally develop. While I don't doubt that some people will take advantage of this freedom to "cheat" on assignments or projects, in the end they will have cheated themselves. I believe the majority of Volunteers will take advantage of this freedom to develop themselves and fulfill their assignments to a greater extent than has been done in the past. Certainly there are risks involved in approaching Volunteers as mature adults. But can the Peace Corps afford to be afraid of risks?

FRED KING

Ac.., Ghana

A monetary low . . .

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I think you should know that Peace Corps allowances have hit a new low in Western Samoa. Rural Volunteers receive 25 *Tala* which equals $35 American.

CARL DANZIGER

Salani, Falealili
Western Samoa

. . . and high

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

This is definitely nothing to brag about, but many of the rural Volunteers in Uruguay were receiving, at one point during the last couple of months, an equivalent of $30.90. I'm glad to say that the value of the dollar has dropped and we are now receiving $39 U.S. in pesos.

MIGUEL H. RAMIREZ

Mercedes, Soriano
R.O. del Uruguay

Magazines available

Five magazines have recently been added to the list of publications available to Volunteers at a reduced rate.

Volunteers wishing to subscribe to any of these magazines may write directly to circulation managers, stating that they are Peace Corps Volunteers. To avoid confusion, Volunteers have been advised to wait until they are settled in the host country, so a permanent address may be sent to the publishers. All five magazines are sent via surface mail; therefore delivery requires about eight weeks. The magazines include:

Atlantic Monthly. $5 annual subscription. Roy Green, Circulation Manager, 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass.

Atlas (A Window on the World). $4 annual subscription. Subscription Department, 18th Floor, 1180 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N. Y. 10036.

Harper's Magazine. $5 annual subscription. Eleanore Futas, 2 Park Ave., New York, N.Y.

Saturday Review. $5 annual subscription. Mr. R. F. Goodman, Circulation Director, *Saturday Review*, 380 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y.

The New Yorker. $6 annual subscription for Volunteers in Latin America; $8 for all other areas. Miss Sue E. Marritt, College Subscription Manager, *The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.*, 25 West 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

In addition, the following magazines are available at special rates for Volunteers from Walter S. Mills, Jr., Vice President, Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, One Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016:

Boating ($4), *Car and Driver* ($4), *Cycle* ($3.50), *Electronics World* ($4), *Flying* ($4), *HiFi/Stereo Review* ($4), *Modern Bride* ($3), *Popular Electronics* ($3.50), *Popular Photography* ($4), and *Skiing* ($2.50).

Budget cut recommended

Sixty-eight per cent of the businessmen who answered a U.S. Chamber of Commerce poll about federal spending recommended that the Peace Corps budget be cut. Twenty-eight per cent of the 13,092 respondents to the survey would leave the Peace Corps budget alone, and four per cent had no opinion on the subject. Twelve other agencies fared worse in the poll, including the Department of Agriculture (92 per cent recommended cuts), foreign aid programs (91 per cent), Office of Economic Opportunity (90 per cent), Space Program (79 per cent). Six agencies fared better, including the U.S. Information Agency (66 per cent of the businessmen called for cuts) and National Institutes of Health (45 per cent). Peace Corps shared the 68 per cent bracket with Military Construction and Ocean Shipping-Ship Construction.

New technical support

COR will soon be an outdated acronym in Peace Corps vocabulary. Director Jack Vaughn has announced that as existing COR (Contractor's Overseas Representative) contracts expire, professional field support of Volunteers will be provided by PTRs (Program Technical Representatives) hired directly by the Peace Corps rather than through an institution.

"The delay, the difficulty of communication and the significant additional cost of institutional backstopping has led us to the conclusion that the right man in the field is still the most important resource available to the Volunteers and that, in many cases . . . the institution is of questionable value to our needs," said Vaughn.

He added that exceptions will be made when the field describes resources needed which are "beyond the capabilities of a single individual."

Memorandum

TO : The field DATE: January, 1968
FROM : The editors
SUBJECT: Different ways of volunteering

At his swearing in ceremony, Deputy Director Brent Ashabranner suggested that when his staff days were over he'd like to sign up as a Peace Corps Volunteer, which he called "the best job in the Peace Corps." One person to test that kind of reverse mobility is a Volunteer-turned-staff member-turned-Volunteer again. Diane Davis Wadsworth served in Ecuador from 1962 to 1964, then worked for a time in the Office of Volunteer Support in Washington. In October, 1966, she joined the Venezuela staff as administrative assistant in Caracas. In July, 1967, she married Peter Wadsworth, a Volunteer whom she had met while orienting his training group in New Mexico a year earlier. She subsequently resigned from the staff in Caracas and re-enrolled as a Volunteer with Peter in San Antonio, Chile. Her assessment: "Volunteer life is much better."

□ □ □

For the record: The Peace Corps staff in Washington went unpaid for a week of work briefly (one day) in November when legal authority to pay salaries expired.

□ □ □

Asked what, if any, special qualities Volunteers had to offer to prospective employers in the U.S., one terminating Volunteer said: "The ability to be a smiling hypocrite."

□ □ □

Shades of Uncle Sam's Army: A Volunteer in Thailand recently reported to the staff: "The trouble with Volunteers is that they never volunteer for anything after they get overseas.". . . Which counters that favorite unbelieved aphorism among former Volunteers: "Once a Volunteer, always a volunteer."

Folk singers: Staff and Volunteers led by Regional Director Paul Zimmerman (with guitar) lent their voices to a benefit performance in Bangalore, India, for a local charitable institution. The songsters, from left, are Dick Derman, Jack Whitcher, Jim Echle, Dick McKerr, Dave Bowman, Sarah Lawrence, John Tucker, Bob McKoon, Jim Haybryne, Dave Charles.

Photograph causes flap

This nationally-distributed photograph of a Peace Corps trainee enroute to a training site in Micronesia provoked several thousand not-so-kindly words for official Washington mailbags and editorial writers.

Some people looked once and thought they saw the Ugly American all over again.

"What a disgrace to this country to send a bum like that out to represent us," one person wrote to the editor of *The Chicago Tribune* which had captioned the photo, "Emissary."

That theme was echoed in the more than 70 letters received in Peace Corps headquarters, including Congressional inquiries initiated by incensed constituents. Specific comments upbraided Peace Corps clothes and beards.

Part of the Peace Corps' answer to critics quoted a letter from a training official in Micronesia who reported that the trainee in question, who is now a Volunteer, "managed to gain the highest score in the latest FSI test —a 2-plus in the Kusaien language . . . is the top participant in the Economic Development program on Udot . . . has translated American songs into Kusaien . . . and has, by the way, shaved his beard . . . because he thought the people of Ponape would want him to do so."

One U.S. senator's reply to a complaining constituent went further. The senator said, in part, that he was not prepared to judge motivation by a beard nor a person "by the label in his sportscoat."

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